

The Resilient Library Newsletter

November 29, 2020

Volume 2, Issue 5

PLEASE NOTE:

Many of the images and underlined text in this newsletter have hyperlinks to their corresponding websites

Press Ctrl+click on images and underlined text to be directed to those websites

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What You Should Have in Your Freezer This Winter

A stocked icebox can make life easier in unpredictable times

by Samantha Lande, [AARP](#)

When COVID-19 hit, many people realized that freezers could do much more than hold a few frozen pizzas and ice cream. It became an essential part of food storage in the kitchen and a way to prepare in an increasingly erratic time.

When it comes to shortages of certain food items, limiting trips to the grocery store to prevent virus exposure, and stocking up on prepared meals in case of illness or to deliver to a struggling friend, the freezer plays an essential role.

But keep a few things in mind so you end up with the ingredients you need or a delicious meal, while avoiding dreaded freezer burn. Here's how to get the most out of your cold food storage.



Avoid freezer burn

To stave off the icicles that can make their way into frozen foods, make sure you are freezing items properly. For starters, always freeze food once it has cooled down, not while it's still hot. Make sure you get as much air out of your storage container as possible and seal tightly to prevent air from getting in and causing freezer burn.

You don't need fancy packaging to freeze things. Plastic "freezer

bags can work great for things like soup, plus they can freeze flat so they take up less room," says executive chef Jeff Stamp of Hampton + Hudson in Atlanta.

If you are freezing leftovers, wrap them in foil first for extra protection before putting them into a zip-top plastic bag. A vacuum sealer to suck all the air out helps food last just a little bit longer.

You'll also want to make sure to freeze what private chef Ian Martin calls

See **In Your Freezer** on page 2

In Your Freezer (continued from page 1)

“mono meals,” or each type of food separately, since you’d typically reheat at the same temperature and time. If, for example, you’ve frozen a meal of pork chops, green beans, and potatoes all in the same container, reheating can get tricky. “It’s the worst when you have a perfect burger, but your broccoli is overheated and gummy,” Martin says.



Organize your freezer space

You should have a variety of foods in your freezer. To save trips to the gro-

cery store this winter, make sure to have a selection of healthy staple items—chicken, fish, frozen vegetables and fruits, and maybe even a few healthy frozen meals in a pinch. We won’t tell if you stash your favorite ice cream or chocolate in the freezer, too.

Most importantly, don’t let your freezer become a bottomless pit where you can’t find anything. Create an organizational system for your freezer—just like you would for the fridge or pantry.

“The number one thing I’m going to recommend that you do is to label the foods that you freeze,” says Amy Gorin, a registered dietitian in the New York City area who specializes in plant-based foods. “Add the dates and use the first-in, first-out system so that you place older items toward

the front of the freezer, so they get used up first.”

Extend the life of ingredients

Overripe bananas, spinach that’s just starting to wilt and a garden surplus are all great ingredients to put in the freezer. Chef Andrew Iwansky from restaurant Datz in Tampa loads up berries at the end of each summer to use throughout the year. He throws them in yogurt and smoothies, cooks them into oatmeal or adds them to pancakes.

Martin consumes lots of fruits and vegetables to help stay healthy and combat stress, but he cautions, “Keep in mind that high-water-content foods will be best for juicing/blending, not great for thawing and eating.” So throw those extra vegetables into a smoothie or soup.

You can even freeze fresh herbs in an ice cube tray. You can either place chopped herbs in the tray and pour boiling water over them (to blanch them and retain color) before you freeze them, or you can freeze them in olive oil to create an infused oil



great for pastas. Just pop out a cube to add to sauces, dressings or pastas. It doesn’t hurt to just have a few bags of store-bought frozen vegetables on hand, too, for a quick side or addition to fried rice or pastas.

Making and freezing extra meals

The freezer is a great place to store extra meals for a friend in need, a guest over for a last-minute dinner or on a night where you just don’t feel like cooking.

1. Freeze in appropriate portions. Consider what one serving would be like and freeze in portions that make sense for your use. If you are cooking for a family or a friend’s family, adjust sizes accordingly.

2. Make an extra batch of whatever you cook for a freezer meal. If you are making meatballs or lasagna, it’s much easier to double the recipe than to have to make it again just to freeze. Eat one now and freeze one for later.

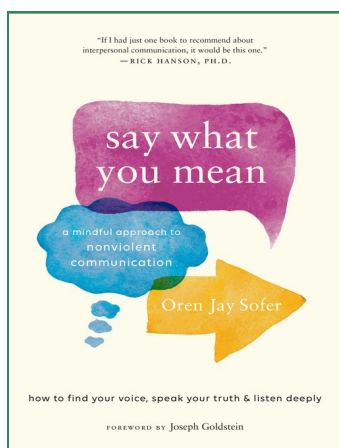
3. Soups and chilis freeze very well and heat up quickly. Freeze a portion or two each time you make soup and you’ll have a great variety later on.

4. Don’t discount breakfast. Muffins, breakfast burritos, even banana bread (just slice before freezing) make great additions to the freezer.

5. A little treat. Cookie dough can often be frozen, and you’ll be able to throw a fresh batch of cookies into the oven quickly.

Book Spotlight— *Say What You Mean: A Mindful Approach to Nonviolent Communication*

Volume 2, Issue 5



*Available in print
at www.rvl.info*

*Also available as
an ebook on
OverDrive or on
the Libby app*

Find your voice, speak your truth, listen deeply—a guide to more meaningful and mindful conversations.

We spend so much of our lives talking to each other, but how often are we simply running on automatic, relying on old habits and hoping for the best? Are we able to truly hear others and speak our mind in a clear and kind way, without needing to get defensive or go on the attack? In this groundbreaking synthesis of mindfulness, somatics, and nonviolent communication, Oren Jay Sofer offers simple yet powerful practices to develop healthy, effective, and satisfying ways of communicating.

The techniques in *Say What You Mean* will help you to:

- Feel confident during conversation
- Stay focused on what really matters in an interaction
- Listen for the authentic concerns behind what others say
- Reduce anxiety before and during difficult conversations
- Find nourishment in day-to-day interactions

“Oren Jay Sofer offers us a brilliant intertwining of focused presence and artful engagement. Our work, family, and any other relationships will benefit from his guidance.”

—Daniel Goleman,
author of *Emotional Intelligence* and
Altered Traits

Keep Moving—*Tai Chi Fit Over 50: Seated Workout DVD*



Tai chi boosts your health and immunity with gentle exercise and deep breathing to rejuvenate and de-stress.

Relax and stay healthy. Deep breathing relieves your stress, calming your mind and body on a cellular level, and immediately boosts your immune response. Enjoy a great seated tai chi workout. In *Tai Chi Fit: Over 50 Seated Workout*,

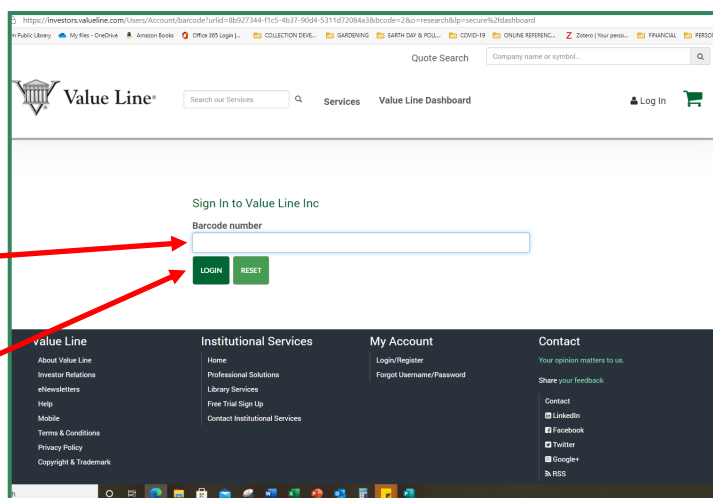
master teacher David-Dorian Ross leads you through a simple tai chi lesson while sitting. A beginner-friendly follow-along routine is shown in a mirror-view format with nothing to memorize. Just follow the moves, and you'll enjoy the health benefits of tai chi, including improved circulation, strength, and flexibility. Perfect for seniors, those with lim-

ited mobility, arthritis joint pain, back pain, or anyone looking for some seated exercises. The *Over 50* seated routine combines basic tai chi moves for an easy, whole-body workout. You'll feel relaxed and energized afterward.

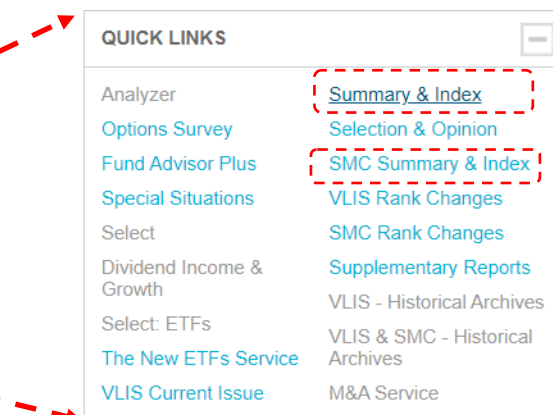
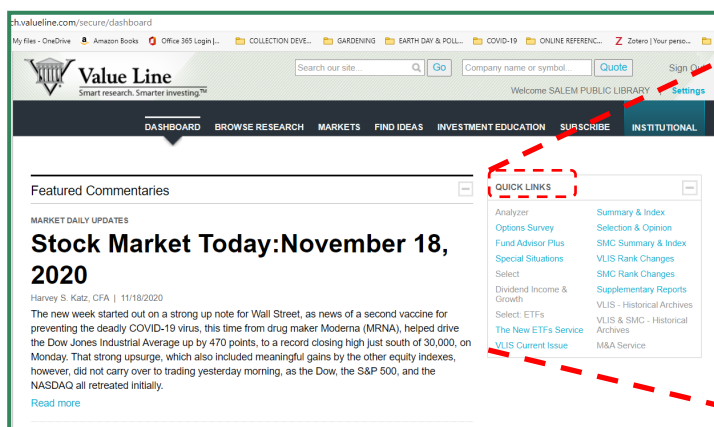
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With this easy vegetarian recipe, you can attract insect lovers like woodpeckers and nuthatches.

With this vegetarian version of suet (traditionally it's made from rendered animal fat) you can provide the perfect winter substitute for birds that normally feast on insects. This lipid-rich treat can help prepare year-round residents for the long winter and is quite the draw for birds such as woodpeckers, wrens, chickadees, nuthatches, and titmice. Check out this recipe, inspired by "The Misfit Baker" blog.

Materials you will need:

- 1 1/2 cups shortening (look for palm oil free options)
- 3/4 cups nut butter (any kind)
- 3 1/2 cups wild bird seed
- 1 cup quick oats
- 1/2 cup corn meal
- Ice cube tray

Step 1. Mix the dry ingredients of bird seed, oats, and corn meal together and set aside.

Step 2. Combine the shortening and nut butter in a separate bowl and melt. Stir until completely combined.

Step 3. Pour the melted mixture into the dry ingredients and stir until combined.

Step 4. Spoon mixture into the ice cube tray.

Step 5. Freeze for one to two hours and place in your suet feeder.

Note: Not recommended for outdoor temperatures above 50 degrees.



Downy woodpecker



Red-bellied woodpecker



White-breasted nuthatch

Photos and Article excerpted from https://www.audubon.org/news/make-your-own-suet?ms=digital-eng-email-ea-x-engagement_20191107_diy-suet_%5baudience%5d&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement_20191107_diy-suet&utm_content=%5baudience%5d&emci=82d9006b-ab1f-eb11-96f5-00155d03bda0&emdi=a4ec87d6-6523-eb11-9fb4-00155d03affc&ceid=3453330

From Caring.com

PART ONE

More than four in 10 family caregivers spend \$5,000 or more annually on caregiving, according to a new Caring.com survey of 2,767 family caregivers. Close to half rely on family funds to cover costs. And with nearly 40% of respondents also spending more than 30 hours per week on caregiving, caring for a loved one has become a full-time, unpaid job for many—one that leaves little time for a caregiver to plan for their own financial future.

“Quite often caregivers find themselves dipping into their own pockets to pay for caregiving expenses,” said Tim Sullivan, Vice President at Caring.com. “Without a plan in place, savings can be depleted and retirement delayed. It’s so important to make the time to speak with your loved ones about finances, eldercare and planning for the future,” Sullivan added.

Caregivers who seek to educate themselves about their options can avoid the unnecessary stress of common financial mistakes. This guide can help you discover the tax advantages, professional services, and investment strategies that can lessen caregiving-related financial strain.

Financial Questions to Ask Your Aging Loved Ones

Managing your own money isn’t easy

under the best of circumstances, so it’s not surprising that most people feel overwhelmed when it’s time to step in and take over the management of their parents’ finances. The first step is to accept that you won’t know what kind of shape their finances are in until you ask. Money is always a sticky topic, especially for adults who are beginning to lose their independence, so it is best to approach the discussion fully prepared to ask the right questions.

Finding answers to the following questions will put you on the path to becoming a more confident, and more capable guardian of your loved ones’ financial future.

1. “Do you have a durable power of attorney?”

The durable power of attorney (DPOA) is considered one of the most important personal legal documents for any older adult to have. Along with a healthcare proxy, it will give whomever your parent designates... the power to make financial and legal decisions (or, in the case of a healthcare proxy, to make medical decisions) if your parent is incapacitated.

Without a durable power of attorney in place, you’ll have to go to court to get appointed as your parent’s guardian. That’s the last thing you’ll want to have to think about in a time of crisis, and it’s a notoriously complicated and messy legal process. With a durable power of attorney and healthcare proxy in place, you can seamlessly make decisions and access accounts on your parent’s behalf without getting the courts involved.

Many people never take another look at their insurance policies or investment account beneficiary designations after they sign the initial papers, but both should be reviewed every year....

2. “Have you updated your will, insurance and retirement account information recently?”

A yearly financial and insurance review also provides a good moment for your parent to review his asset



See **Finances** on page 7

allocation and evaluate whether he has enough, or too much life insurance. If, for example, his children are grown and his spouse has other funds on which to live after he's gone, your parent could think about cutting back on the amount of life insurance he carries to save money on annual premiums.



3. “Do you have plans or insurance in place to pay for long-term care if it’s needed?”

Even if your parent is in good health today, eventually, he'll need some type of long-term care—and the costs are staggering. A year in a nursing home costs more than \$50,000 on average, and much more in some states. Usually, neither health insurance nor Medicare cover any of these expenses, so your parent should have some type of plan in place to pay for such care should it be needed. Long-term care insurance is a good option and can be added to existing life insurance policies, possibly at a discounted rate.

Medicaid also covers some nursing

home costs, but your parent should consult an elder-law attorney now to find out if he qualifies for Medicaid. If not, the attorney may advise spending down assets—literally, the process of spending money without gifting or transferring assets until your parent meets the strict income requirements necessary to qualify for Medicaid. Without a plan in place to pay for long-term care, you and your siblings will be on the hook to pick up the cost unless your parent has very deep pockets.



4. “Who’s advising you?”

Although most adults are fiercely private about their finances and want to maintain their independence, it's important in case of an emergency that you know how to contact your parent's attorney, financial advisor, accountant and insurance agent. At the same time, as your parent ages, you can keep an eye on whether his financial and legal advisers are scrupulous, objective and well-versed in elder financial issues, with no vested interest in selling specific products. Getting the details on exactly who is advising your parent is a good way to

protect him from scams, as well as to ensure that he has funds in case of an emergency.

5. “Where is all this stuff?”

If your parent has a stroke or heart attack, the last thing you're going to want to worry about is what his Social Security number is, what health insurance he has or whether the mortgage has been paid. That's why it's important to sit down with him before a crisis hits and find out what kind of bill-paying system he has in place, what insurance he has and where all his important papers are located.

Although some may balk at sharing this kind of personal information, reassure him that you don't have to see any of his private papers now; you only need to know where they are to ensure his financial well-being in the event that he's not able to take care of it himself.

Excerpted from <https://www.caring.com/caregivers/finances/#government-benefits-for-elder-caregivers>

To Be Continued in Next Week's Issue:

PART TWO:
Managing Your Parents'
Finances, Step by Step

Caregiver Action Network—Caregiver Help Desk 855-227-3640



Caregiver Action Network (CAN) is the nation's leading family caregiver organization working to improve the quality of life for the more than 90 million Americans who care for loved ones with chronic conditions,

disabilities, disease, or the frailties of old age. CAN serves a broad spectrum of family caregivers ranging from the parents of children with significant health needs, to the families and friends of wounded soldiers; from a young couple dealing with a diagnosis of MS, to adult children caring for parents with Alzheimer's disease. CAN (the National Family Caregivers Association) is a non-profit organization providing

education, peer support, and resources to family caregivers across the country free of charge.

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*“The happiness of your life
depends upon the quality of
your thoughts.”*

—Marcus Aelius Aurelius